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Steffens



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MAY - 1916

# INTO MEXICO AND OUT

By LINCOLN STEFFENS



## WAKE UP AMERICANS!

DO NOT BE DECEIVED BY THOSE WHO ARE HEARTLESSLY USING THEIR UTMOST EFFORTS TO THRUST US INTO A DISASTROUS AND SHAMEFUL WAR WITH THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO, WITH THE BASELY SELFISH AND UNJUSTIFIED PURPOSE OF ENHANCING THE VALUE OF THEIR INTEREST IN OUR SISTER REPUBLIC.

OUR MOTTO SHOULD BE - "PEACE, UNION AND FRIENDSHIP" WITH ALL THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES.



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COURTESY EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE

THE TRUTH  
JUSTICE  
LIGHT  
TO  
AMERICAN PEOPLE

1810

1857

1867

1910

1916

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# Everybody's Magazine

NUMBER FIVE

MAY 1916

VOLUME XXXIV

## INTO MEXICO AND - OUT!

By LINCOLN STEFFENS

FOR five months Mr. Steffens has been traveling in Mexico with Carranza. EVERYBODY'S readers know Steffens. He is an expert and seasoned reporter. His record in digging the truth out of complicated situations gives this article added authority and value. THE EDITOR.

THE oldest American in Vera Cruz, Mexico, was frightened and he was glad when we got the news that the American troops were to cross the Mexican border in pursuit of Villa.

"At last!" he breathed, his eyes alight. "How we have prayed for it, ached for it, petitioned, pulled—plotted for intervention. And now, at last, it has come. Thank God!"

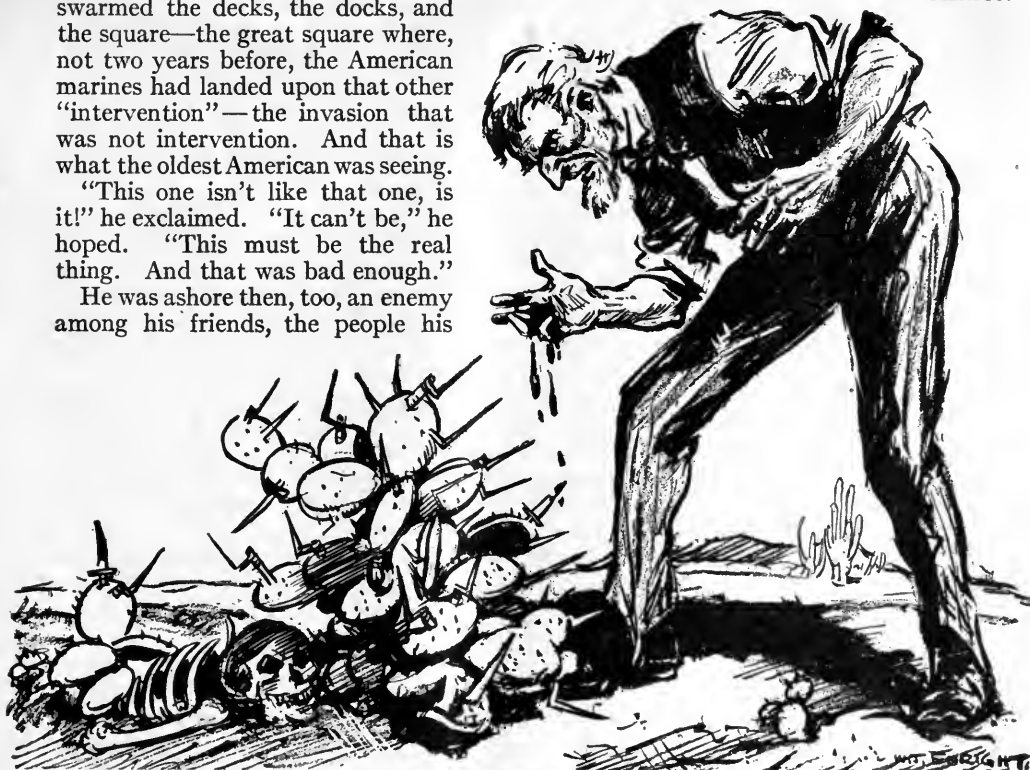
Then he looked all around us, and he paled.

We were standing on the after-deck of the Ward liner *Monterey*, which lay loading at her dock, about to sail for New York. I was "going home;" my friend was seeing me off. It was March eleven, a hot, tropical day, and the solid old Spanish city swam, like an inspired black and white, in the saturating sunshine. The only colors that held their own were the silvered blue of the harbor waters in front and the gilded fringe of high palms behind the low-built town. Ordinarily, there would have been no sounds either, and no movement; Vera Cruz should have been asleep; but this was "sailing-day." The Mexicans swarmed the decks, the docks, and the square—the great square where, not two years before, the American marines had landed upon that other "intervention"—the invasion that was not intervention. And that is what the oldest American was seeing.

"This one isn't like that one, is it!" he exclaimed. "It can't be," he hoped. "This must be the real thing. And that was bad enough."

He was ashore then, too, an enemy among his friends, the people his

THERE IS  
A GREAT  
DANGER IN  
MEXICO.







people were attacking, and he had told me often of the things he had seen and heard, hoped and feared, at "the occupation."

"They don't know this news yet?" he said, with a nod at the busy crowds.

"No," I reminded him, "it came by wireless to us Americans only."

He laughed nervously. "You're lucky to be out of it," he said, and, shaking my hand again, he went smiling down the gang-plank. A popular, familiar figure there, he greeted and was greeted by all sorts and conditions of Mexicans, who smiled back intimately at him. But he hurried, he seemed almost to duck out through that mass of friendly workers and masters.

He had cause to duck. He knew—all Americans resident in Mexico know—the hate, the watchful, waiting hate of the Mexican for the American.

"Hate you?" said a wild young Mexican officer to me one day on a troop-train. "The Mexican hate for you Gringos would put joy into the supreme passion of rape, fire into the flames of arson, virtue into robbery, and a crown of glory on death and defeat at war with you."

When I laughed in the face of his hate and remarked that it was too well-expressed to be deeper than his mind, he choked: "Both, both with our





PAINTED BY  
HARVEY  
DUNN

heads and our hearts, we hate you."

"Yes," said a thoughtful member of Carranza's cabinet circle, "there is hatred among us for you, and it is dangerous; as a prejudice it is very dangerous. But also it has reasons for being, and the reasons can be reasoned with—and in time removed. If there be time."

True. The enmity in Mexico against "the Colossus of the North," as they call the United States, is all sorts of hate held by all sorts of people there. It is

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INTO MEXICO  
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reasonable and unreasonable; it is thought and felt; it is open-eyed and it is blind; it is suspicion and experience. It is racial, religious, economic, and it is historical. We did take away from Mexico Texas, New Mexico, California—the whole of our great Southwest; and their school histories tell their story of it; and their story is one of good American excuses to cover a bad slaveholder's conspiracy with traitorous Spanish and Mexican aristocrats.

True or false, they believe their story. And they see that the Americans in Mexico, typically, and the Americans along the border, and some other Americans—practically all the Americans the Mexican people know or know about—belonged to, thrived with, and liked the old Diaz régime, and are openly or secretly against the Mexican revolutionary movement. They think that the American ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, was in the plot to overthrow and kill Madero, the prophet of their revolt. They know that leading Americans, with other foreigners, were with and for Huerta, the military autocrat, and, failing him, are asking now for Villa, or any other "strong man," like Diaz, like a czar, like an American boss—any tyrant that will put down the Mexican people, make them go back to work for American and other masters. They may need, but they don't want, the American boss system in politics and the rushing American industrial organization which turns out a few rich and many poor. That's what they are fighting against. They have other ideals, and, better or worse, they prefer theirs. We, sure of the superior excellence of ours, we continue to thrust ours upon them—our ideals, our ideas, our virtues, and also (as they see) our vices, and our methods, and our corruption; and all for their good. This is the height of our offending: our philanthropy.

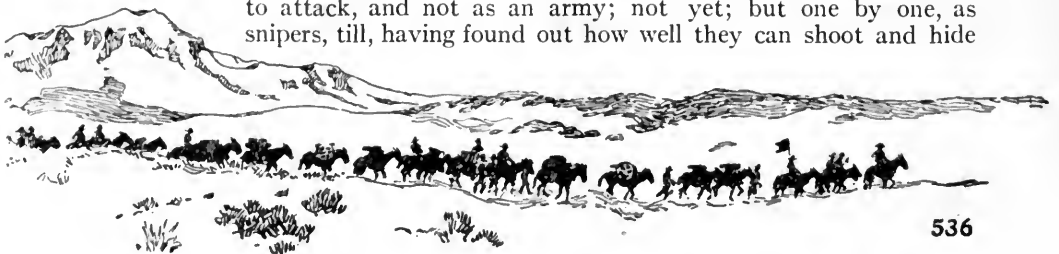
"If," said a Mexican statesman to me at Eagle Pass last fall, "if you Americans would look across the border there and say that Mexico is a rich country and beautiful, and that you covet it; that we Mexicans are a weak people and you are strong; and that, therefore, you are going to come over and take Mexico—we could understand that. We would fight, and we would probably die, but we wouldn't hate you so much."

WE DIDN'T know that day in Vera Cruz that Villa had given a good excuse for this second invasion of Mexico. The news that the bandit had raided into New Mexico, reached Southern Mexico later. And it was still later when it became known there that Carranza had consented to the invasion on an agreement with our Government under which either Mexican or American troops might cross the border to pursue a bandit. Had we known all this (and it should have been reported to our consuls all together), my friend wouldn't have been quite so glad nor quite so scared. But he would have been scared some and some glad, and he undoubtedly still has some hope and some fear. I'd like to spread his fear.

The careless correspondents with Pershing's careless troops describe what they see on Villa's trail: the burning alkali desert and the blazing, bareboned mountains; the abandoned villages and the staring old men and women and little children along the vacant way. I've been in that country, and that isn't what I see there.

I see the suspicious, hateful eyes of all the able-bodied Mexicans, men and women, watching from behind distant rocks and brush the passing of our soldiers, watching and waiting for the word to come from their chiefs to attack, and not as an army; not yet; but one by one, as snipers, till, having found out how well they can shoot and hide

MARCHING  
OVER DYNA-  
MITE.



and run—both the men and the women—and having gathered from all the climates of all their great, wild country, they can pour down upon our few thousands a deluge of people, mad to kill or die.

For the Mexicans are not afraid to die. During the last five months when I was in Mexico scores of them, of all classes and kinds, were stood up against a wall and shot. I never went to see "the sight," but I questioned acquaintances who did, and no witness said he ever saw a Mexican quail or even flinch before the rifles leveled at his breast; not one.

A war with Mexico is very likely to be a war of extermination. The people, the common people, all go to war there, the women and children along with the men. The women and children forage and do the camp work, but when their men drop, the women frequently pick up the rifles and continue the fire. So the Mexican people will be at our battles with them. We can get at them. And we'll defeat them. Every intelligent Mexican I ever spoke with about it, admitted that in the end we would be victorious.

But also they say, and the Americans who know this people say, that before the end we shall have to slaughter the Mexican race as we did the Indians. If that is so, I say that our victory would be a disgrace to us and a disaster to the world, and that the men and the interests, American, Spanish, Mexican, British, German, and Roman, that are risking such a monumental crime—they can not have thought out what they are praying and plotting and lying and paying out good money for.

And yet that's what some people are doing. That's what my friend was hoping for in Vera Cruz. That's what a lot of foreigners I know are hoping and praying for in other parts of Mexico: intervention, and the wild hate and the mad war it will turn loose upon us. That was Huerta's idea when, in despair of our Government's recognition of his effort to set up another Diaz régime, he tempted President Wilson to land American troops in Vera Cruz. He thought the Mexican people would rise up as one man—no, as fifteen million men, women, and children—and kill, rape, or rob every American in Mexico, and then go on into a war upon the American people—for him.

And that's what Villa or—since Villa doesn't think much—that's what the men and the interests back of Villa thought when they planned that raid into New Mexico, and drew our watching, waiting army into old Mexico after—the bandit. They thought that that would be intervention, and that that would arouse and unite all classes, tribes, and parties of the Mexican people, from Carranza down, into one nation to fight with Villa against our people.

It's treason we are talking about: international treason; treason to Mexico in Mexico and treason to the United States in the United States. And it's war the traitors are plotting. With the picture of Europe before them, "bandits" in "barbarous" Mexico, "citizens" of the "civilized" United States, and "subjects" of other "Christian" nations are for war in America!

President Wilson says so. We all know now that that raid from Mexico into New Mexico was expected on our side of the border. The ammunition for it was sent from here—to come back and be used to



shoot our people. The border newspapers had it in first-page "spreads." American soldiers knew and spoke of it two days before it happened. And four days ahead of the event the State Department at Washington advised the War Department that it was planned to occur. Now President Wilson has the information of all the agents of the State Department; of the representatives in Mexico and along our border of all the departments, including the secret service, which is very strong and very active down there. He inquired into this matter, and he took time to get and to consider all the information available. And on March twenty-six, after two weeks of inquiry and thought, he said in a public statement that *"there were persons along the border actively engaged in creating friction between the Government of the United States and the de facto Government of Mexico for the purpose of bringing about intervention in the interest of certain owners of Mexican properties."*

The President of the United States would not make a charge of that nature without knowledge. He didn't give his evidence, but he must have it, with names and dates and, possibly, prices. I have it on good authority that he has, and that he is to be asked to give the names of "the sinister and unscrupulous influences afoot" to bring on a war by getting some careless soldier or mob to kick that dynamite of hate that lies all over Mexico where our soldiers are pursuing "a bandit." I hope President Wilson will not publish those names. If he did, the American people would demand that those men be shot or hanged, and when that was done, they'd be sated

and satisfied. They might never care to know then what was the matter down there.

I know personally and well some of the Americans and others in Mexico and along the border who want to "bring about intervention." They are not "bad men;" not "sinister and unscrupulous." But we all know or knew of great and good men who are for intervention or almost



"I HOPE PRESIDENT WILSON  
WILL NOT PUBLISH HIS NAME."



THE RAIL-ROADS ARE IN THE HANDS OF THE MILITARY.

anything else that will stop the Mexican revolution. There is Cardinal Gibbons and many good Catholics, and Colonel Roosevelt and many politicians, Wall Street financiers and business men, and good women and—others. What is it that makes these men and women think and say and do treasonable things which might cause a bloody American war?

I went into Mexico, the beautiful, last fall from Eagle Pass. First Chief Carranza, with his cabinet, staff, and troop-trains, General Obregon and several other generals with theirs—the de facto government of Mexico, which our Government had just “recognized,” had come down to the border at Piedras Negras. The government on wheels was about to roll “all over Mexico”: a rare chance to see the country, the people and their leaders; so I asked leave to go along. There was grave wagging of heads.

I had met most of the chiefs just a year before in southern Mexico, when I went to Vera Cruz to interview them, and they had kept me dangling in the cafés for two months. I had represented myself as a writer able to understand and sympathize with the stated purposes of their revolution or with any other effort of any other human beings to solve the social problem which had balked us, so far, in the United States; which had balked all men everywhere, so far.

They had received me, finally, in Vera Cruz, and they talked to me, freely and fully, but hopelessly, with no faith, with doubt and suspicion: Carranza, Obregon, Cabrera, the Secretary of the Treasury, and many other chiefs, big and little, and their followers; citizens and soldiers; and so did their opponents, of course: Mexican, American, and other foreigners. That long but sunny visit gave me a pretty good sense of the personnel, ideals, and the conflicting forces of revolutionary Mexico. I got, for example, the dregs of their doubt of me.

I was an American, and therefore incapable of understanding the struggle of a people for land and liberty! Americans—they said—“Americans from the United States have a mind and a heart only for law and order and business.”

This doubt stood on the bridge at Eagle Pass, barring me from Piedras Negras. It yielded. I had made friends meanwhile in New York and Washington with the friends of the revolution, and they vouched for my “disinterested interest.” And they won at last. They had to work, but they got me at last an order for a berth in General Carranza’s train. So I went along. For weeks I traveled over northern Mexico, in that slow-moving train with the First Chief and his cabinet, his staff, and the veteran generals and young governors of the States we passed through.

War-wasted, uncultivated, treeless, big and sunny—it was like a trip over the face of the moon. But life was beginning. We stopped at every

city, town, village; at every considerable group of peons. Also, the First Chief stopped at and had photographed every ruin: factory, bridge, station, or railroad train. And they were many, those battle-fields. But we heard and we could see that the people, half-believing that peace had really come, were preparing to plant and work and—function.

At Saltillo I quit, and ran up to Mexico City to get the other side of the picture. I lived three months in that ancient, modern old Tory capital among my own countrymen and the other foreigners, but in touch also with the Mexican critics of the Carranzista régime, both reactionary and radical. Then I dropped down to Queretaro, the revolutionary capital, rejoined the First Chief, and made with him and his government another long, slow journey through rich, fat western Mexico: from the temperate climate of the plateau, up into the mining regions and down through the hot tropics to the west coast: Irapuato, Guanajuato, Guadalajara, Colima to Manzanillo on the Pacific Ocean, and back.

It took a month, for again we stopped at every collection of people, municipal or rural. And here also life was resuming. The planting, the building—all the activities were farther advanced than in the north. Mexico is going back to work, leisurely work, but with that sun and that soil and those mines—productive. No government can stop it. Will the Carranzista government help it? What about that government?

The Carranzistas only tolerated me. There were individual exceptions; I made some friends, but in general I was merely suffered in those trains all those three months of travel. So were the two to five or six other Americans who from time to time were there. Not that we were not properly treated as guests; Mexican hospitality is most punctilious. No, we Gringos shared the good though very simple fare of the First Chief and his cabinet. Most of the time I was at his own table. We were sometimes forgotten, but we were always welcome at the fiestas, receptions, dances and other functions in the towns we visited. We were not told, but in the close confinement of the presidential train we couldn't help knowing a good deal of what was going on. We saw our hosts at close range; we heard the problems and the policies of the government discussed, sometimes with an intimate sense of the differences among them. But—and this is my point, which I want to make without the slightest implication of reproach—I was not treated in a way calculated to prejudice my judgment in favor of the Carranzistas. And this is my judgment:

*Señor Carranza and his inner circle of advisers are as sincere, as honest, as determined, and—as perplexed a group of radical reformers as I ever saw (or heard of or read about) in power.*

Which is one reason for the opposition to him.

ONE day in Mexico City a big American concessionaire was damning Carranza. I remarked, however, that he didn't put dishonesty into the catalogue of his faults.

"Oh, no," he answered, "he's honest. We know that." And, with a laugh, he added: "We know it, because we tried him."

It developed, on the contrary, that Carranza's tested honesty is one of his faults. If he were dishonest, "we" could do business with him.

There is dishonesty in the Carranza party; lots of it. The stealing and grafting is most confusing. But it is petty, and my experience in American cities suggests that it is inevitable. When you break down, as this Mexican earthquake has done, the big, orderly system of regular, "honest"



graft, the anarchy of petty graft takes its place. The universal desire for easy money is freed, and all sorts and conditions of men go to stealing—directly, rawly—cash. It's a stage of democracy apparently. Our cities are just coming out of it; Mexico is having just now her Tweed days.

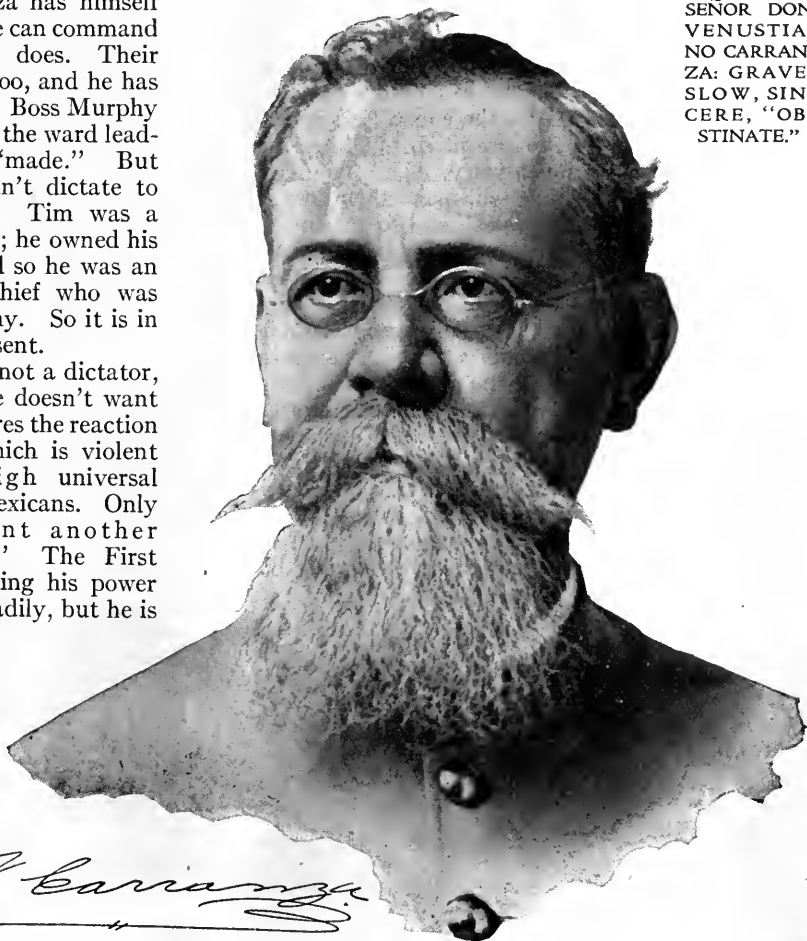
It's disgusting and discouraging, and the American and other foreign critics of the revolution who make much of it are sincere. Their personal property isn't safe; business is hampered; even transportation isn't safe. Shippers have to pay 5,000 pesos (bribe or tip) for a car, and they lose goods in transit by freight, express, and mail. It's bad, this petty graft, but it isn't dangerous. It simply can't go on.

The honest Carranzistas understand this. They are aware of the stealing; they speak of it plainly. "I know," said Mr. Carranza one day, when we spoke of it, but he added in his patient way: "We can't deal with it yet." And another participant in the conversation told of a case. Three thieving officials were caught red-handed in the State of Vera Cruz. One night they were put into jail, to be shot the next day. But the next day they were out, and their next appearance was in full uniform on the staff of a general, a Carranzista general!

Mr. Carranza couldn't touch them there, nor that general, either; not yet. The First Chief is only the first chief. He is not an autocrat, as his critics seem to think he is, or should be. His title, the phrase which is used always in official and formal documents to describe his position, is the "first chief, in charge of the executive power." Not the executive power. Mexico is in a tribal state, like Tammany Hall of old. There are some chiefs and generals whom Carranza has himself appointed. He can command them, and he does. Their power is his, too, and he has theirs and his. Boss Murphy can dictate to the ward leaders he has "made." But Murphy couldn't dictate to Tim Sullivan. Tim was a self-made boss; he owned his own ward; and so he was an independent chief who was "with" Murphy. So it is in Mexico at present.

Carranza is not a dictator, and I think he doesn't want to be. He shares the reaction from Diaz, which is violent and well-nigh universal among the Mexicans. Only foreigners want another "strong man." The First Chief is building his power slowly but steadily, but he is

SEÑOR DON  
VENUSTIA-  
NO CARRAN-  
ZA: GRAVE,  
SLOW, SIN-  
CERE, "OB-  
STINATE."



*V Carranza*



trying to build it democratically. That is one of the purposes of his travels. He is going all over Mexico to meet his people, get their confidence, and by and by their votes. It's like an American political campaign. Only Carranza does not make many speeches, and those he does make are short, plain, not exciting. He is no demagogue.

When our train rolled into a station the people were there with their band. Every community in Mexico has a band. And the band played and the people applauded: they didn't cheer; they were only ready to cheer. But Mr. Carranza would walk out on his rear platform, look a long minute at the crowd until they became still. Then he stepped down among them, and stood there, silent again, silencing. It was almost dampening, his deliberate long silence. Some staff-officer would have to prompt them.

"Go up to him," he would say; "he's your Chief. Tell him what you want; what you expect of him."

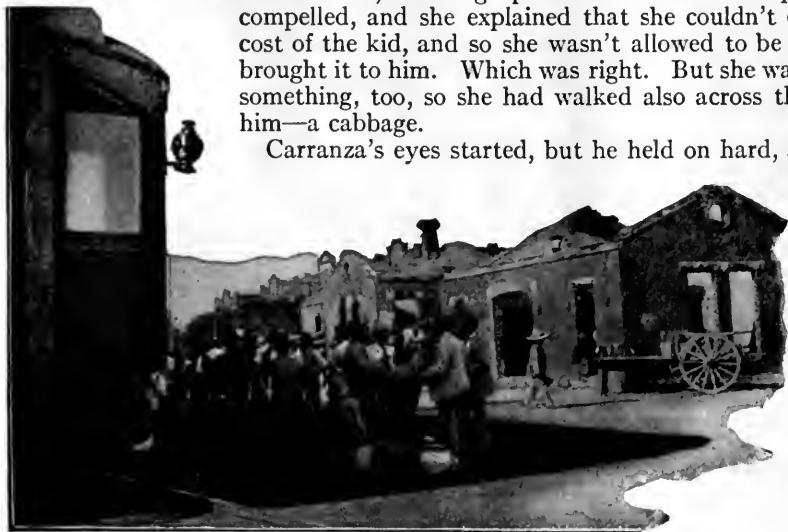
Usually it was a woman who would go up to him first—a woman who wanted to find a son or husband that had gone to war. The *jefe* would tell some officer to try to trace the man, and report to the woman. That would start the men, and one by one they expressed themselves and their needs. And their needs were simple, personal, usually. There were places where some local chief would state a general need. At one village a woman said that the community land had not been restored to the people. Carranza turned to the governor of that State, asked him why not, and having listened patiently to the long, technical explanation, told him gently to go ahead and do the thing, and "report to these people and me."

He never made any promises; not one. He never harangued at all. When the village or city put up a speaker, Carranza listened; no matter how long the oration or how strong or weak, he was patient. And once in a long while he would reply, briefly, plainly, without a gesture or an emotion. Usually he would sign to some cabinet officer or other to speak in his stead. And the effect? So far as I could make out, he left his people impressed; not inspired, but impressed with a quiet sense of his solidity, honesty, and loyalty. And he? He knows his people, and so he knows that only time will make them free; time and opportunities. That's why he is so slow himself and so patient.

He has feeling. Once a few people—not a dozen—stopped the train to make him a gift. It was a kid. They had walked miles across the desert to deliver the little animal, and they said that they bought it by taking contributions from all those that had come to fetch it to him. They had put in a few *centavos* each, raising thus, say, a quarter of a dollar. Carranza accepted the gift, thanked them, and then turned to an old, old woman who had stood, listening apart. And she came up, frightened but compelled, and she explained that she couldn't contribute to the cost of the kid, and so she wasn't allowed to be of the party that brought it to him. Which was right. But she wanted to give him something, too, so she had walked also across the desert, to give him—a cabbage.

Carranza's eyes started, but he held on hard, and when he was sure of himself he accepted the gift and thanked the woman with simple dignity.

THE PEOPLE  
WERE THERE  
—AT EVERY  
STATION.



EVERYBODY'S  
MAGAZINE

To a democrat it was discouraging to see how little that people asked; how much they wanted, and hoped and trusted; and how dependent they are upon the good faith, the understanding, and the loyalty to them of their First and Last Chief. They are giving all, all their power to Carranza, and he is going around collecting it. And he has to have it.

The First Chief and his inner circle need the power of the people to awe and check the power of the outer circle of second chiefs, and third, and fourth, and his enemies and Mexico's. He is the head now of an oligarchy; his power is military; it is made up of the powers contributed by the uncertain loyalties of generals and chiefs, some of whom (not all) are not revolutionists at all, but only able individuals out for individual success, not Mexico's. Without democratic power the Carranzista oligarchy can not deal now with that general who saved the three thieves of Vera Cruz. That general's army is his, as Villa's was, and he might lead it into the field against Carranza, as Villa did his, with foreign financial help.

SO MR. CARRANZA in his wisdom (and he is politically wise) avoids breaks with the sources of his oligarchic military power, while he goes about fondling his own democratic, political power. Everybody is with him now, or pretends to be. Military power brooks no free speech, no differences, and under the martial law of revolutionary Mexico public opinion seems unanimous. This is impossible. It can't last. Nature divides men into at least two parties, conservative and progressive, and I could see everywhere, north, south, east, and west, in the cities, in the country, in the clubs—yes, even on Mr. Carranza's train, this line of demarcation coming. But the oligarchy see it, too.

"No," said one of them, "it isn't here, not yet, but it is coming. We shall divide. But not yet. If it came now, before the army is disbanded and reorganized, it will follow military lines, and we'll have to fight it out with bullets. And we don't want another civil war in Mexico. So Mr. Carranza wants to put off the issue till some great civic meeting, like the constitutional convention. Then our split will be a political division and can be fought out politically, in the congress or at the polls."

This may explain something Washington has never seemed to understand: Why Carranza doesn't grapple harder with some of the representations of the State Department. It may explain to other critics why the First Chief doesn't tackle more vigorously other pressing, practical problems, like that of transportation: he can't; the railroads are still far from free of military control. And it certainly leads to my understanding of some of the reasons why this clear-headed statesman puts up with the shameless, ludicrous and most embarrassing incompetence and petty grafting of his crooked subordinates, high and low.

Mr. Carranza and his inner circle of advisers are planning ways and means of putting a stop or a check to the big grafts: the great mining and oil concessions, and the enormous land grafts.

*And that's another reason why there is such a desperate opposition to him at home and abroad.*

The Carranzistas have a theory. They think their theory is the theory of the Mexican revolution. Their theory is that the problem of civilized society is not poverty, but riches; that the solution of it is not to cure or nurse the poor, but to prevent the accumulations of enormous individual wealth; and so their policy is to find out and close up the holes through which most or some of the products of labor leak through the workers,

intellectual and physical, into the possession of—philanthropists. Thus it is economic, not political democracy and equality they are working for. In a word, they are trying to change the rules of the game, their game, our game, the game as it is played all over the civilized world.

*Which, being felt and not credited or understood, is another reason for the opposition to the reconstruction of the Mexican revolution.*

One day in Guadalajara, Mr. Silliman, our representative then with the de facto government, arranged a meeting of American and other foreign business men there with Señor Luis Cabrera, Carranza's Secretary of the Treasury.

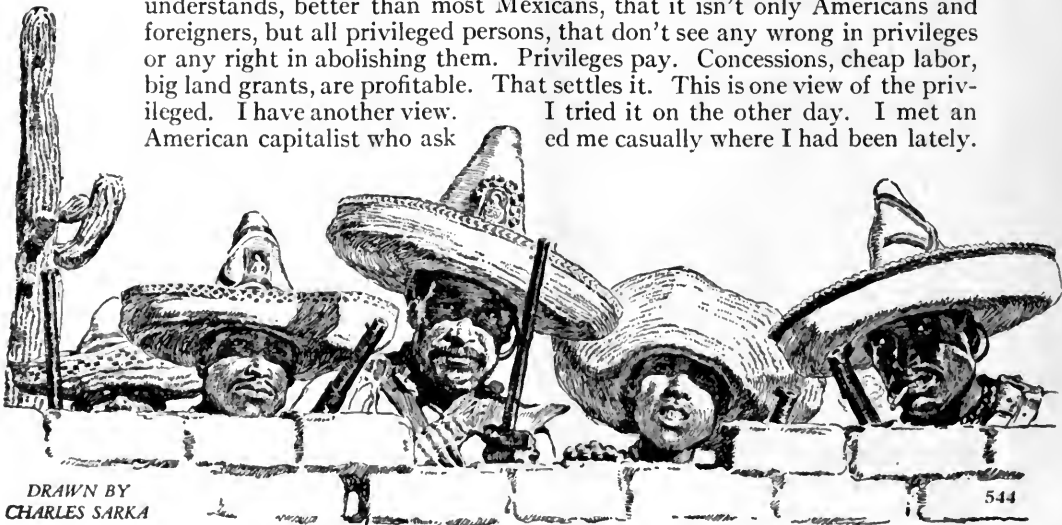
The purpose of the meeting was to give the business men a chance to state their grievances to an official with authority and power to explain and act. And they expressed themselves one by one, and it was very disappointing; natural, typical, but discouraging. As Mr. Cabrera pointed out to them, diplomatically and not clearly, each man spoke, not as a friend of Mexico, not as a social being, but as a craftsman: the banker of the difficulties of his bank, the exchange broker as a broker, the miner as a miner; and not of their big problems, but of the particular, petty problems of that week or month. The Government had erred. That he granted, and he explained that the reason they had erred was because they were not experienced statesmen and experts; their elder statesmen had served the privileged class and been driven by their consciences out of the country. The new government were citizens new to their jobs, and in need of broad criticism, technical advice, and expert assistance. But none of the gentlemen present had offered any suggestions that could be used. They all were under the delusion that the Government was trying to reestablish the old order of things; that the revolution was merely an accident and interruption, a sort of disaster or debauch, and that, since it was over, the thing to do was to get everything going again just as it was before.

And then he explained that that was not the idea of the revolutionary Government; that the Government wanted business to be resumed, but on a better basis, better for the people of Mexico. They wanted banks to be more useful, socially, than before, and not to make so much money for the bankers. And so with the other lines of business. How were the railroads, the mines, the shops, to be got to perform their true functions? A hard question. The Government didn't know just how to answer it; they needed help, but couldn't get it from the specialists, because the banker and the broker, the merchant and the miner, seemed to think that all that was necessary was to start business and its privileges up again.

Mr. Cabrera wasn't understood. He didn't expect to be understood. He understands, better than most Mexicans, that it isn't only Americans and foreigners, but all privileged persons, that don't see any wrong in privileges or any right in abolishing them. Privileges pay. Concessions, cheap labor, big land grants, are profitable. That settles it. This is one view of the privileged. I have another view.

American capitalist who ask

I tried it on the other day. I met an  
ed me casually where I had been lately.



"In Mexico!" he exclaimed, all interest. "Well, then, maybe you can tell me what the deuce they're up to down there. I've got seven or eight hundred thousand dollars in a hole down there, and I'd like to know what to expect."

When I had told him what they were trying to do and that if they succeeded he might lose his money, this wicked, privileged capitalist said:

"So that's their game, is it? Well, if there's a chance of their winning out on it, if there's one chance in a hundred of their putting that over, they can have mine."

"But," I objected, "it's precisely you and your crowd that are spoiling the one chance of success."

"I know," he answered, "but we didn't understand; I didn't and they don't."

It may be foolish, but I believe that this man is as typical as any other "American"; that the trouble with our captains of industry is, not their evil disposition but their "special interests" and their lack of understanding, and that that is the cause of the trouble on our border and—the matter with Mexico. And it's hard to understand.

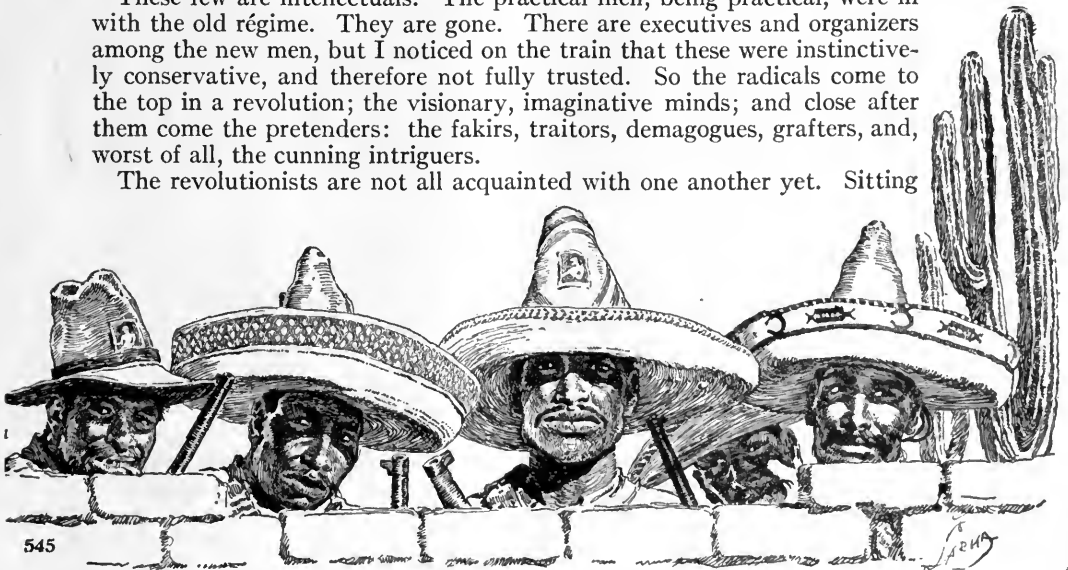
Carranza and his party are on the job of reconstructing a state of society that has been all shot to pieces by a long and a pretty thorough revolution. Governments, roads, bridges, factories, whole towns, and many, many buildings have been destroyed. Only some old false ideas, beliefs, and hopes are left; and they hinder. But the revolution, the military, the destructive process seems to be over; it is over, if the First Chief succeeds in his policy of staving off all critical acts and issues till they can be fought out, without arms.

But the effects of the revolution and the forces set free by it are felt still. Men, primitive demons like Villa, who were turned loose in the war, are at large; many of them. Villa is but one of the type. Then, too, Indians, peons, servants, and slaves, the descendants of a high-spirited race, conquered and long repressed by generations of force and kindness, were freed, armed, and told to "go to it." And they went to it, and they liked it, and they are reluctant to give up vice and leisure, adventure and power, to go back to work. Europe will have to deal with this problem when the nations turn to reconstruction after their war. Mexico has it now. She has a people, a whole people, who have tasted liberty, and enjoyed and abused it. For practically everybody was or became a revolutionist. And all want land or "something for nothing," and only a few—comparatively very few—know or remember or care about the ideals of the revolution.

These few are intellectuals. The practical men, being practical, were in with the old régime. They are gone. There are executives and organizers among the new men, but I noticed on the train that these were instinctively conservative, and therefore not fully trusted. So the radicals come to the top in a revolution; the visionary, imaginative minds; and close after them come the pretenders: the fakirs, traitors, demagogues, grafters, and, worst of all, the cunning intriguers.

The revolutionists are not all acquainted with one another yet. Sitting

SUSPICIOUS,  
HATEFUL  
EYES  
WATCHING  
THE PASS-  
ING OF OUR  
SOLDIERS.



there in that train, watching and listening as a spectator, not supposed to understand much Spanish, I could see that Carranza and his inner circle didn't always know their man. They'd give a tough, technical job to a good, insincere talker, who was not a "doer" at all. They'd recall and I'd see and talk with "failures" or "crooks," who never should have been appointed. And because while they failed or grafted they had "made friends" and influence, they couldn't be simply discharged. They had to be promoted.

The consequence was things that "had to be done" were often not done, or badly or criminally done.

*Which is a reason not only for the opposition, but for the misunderstanding, of the de facto government by their "practical" critics.*

AND the practical men themselves have a right to be understood. They are by birth, apparently, naturally concerned about keeping things going. Other men are born to change things and set the wrongs right, and these innovators have their part to play. It's an important part, and the world is slow to recognize it as such. But "we visionaries"—let me say "we"—must recognize that in Mexico, for example, it is a serious matter that the trains don't run regularly and numerous enough to carry milk for the babies and food for the people generally from the farmers to the cities; that the miners can't get their bullion out and the merchants can't get their goods in; that there is no money to trade with and no credit; that there is hunger and disease in a rich, healthy country. That's what the practical men see and say and are ready to fight about. And they have a right to their rage.

But the visionaries in the Carranzista government have a right also to be understood. They have everything to do, and all at once; everything. And at the same time they have everything to change a little, and all at once. In the United States, a few years ago, we tackled with our organized government the railroad problem, and we devoted a couple of years to settling it, and then didn't settle it. Then, here a year or two ago, we took up and worked long and hard at the problem of banks. Meanwhile other things, good and bad, went on well or ill. In Mexico that small group of new, sincere, honest, inexperienced, but "obstinate" statesmen have the railroad problem, and the banks, and the money problem; the trusts, the labor problem and the education problem, the land and the whole agrarian problem; and the tariff *vs.* free trade; and the army, which they have to use, reorganize, and disband simultaneously; and a government to set up, city, state, and federal—while they are drawing a constitution and creating courts and a judicial system; and all the while they are expected to chase bandits and keep order; answer the half-dozen representations our State Department makes every day; protect Mexican sovereignty from our and other foreign governments' vetoes of their acts; permit our marines to land at Vera Cruz and our soldiers to come hunting bandits in their territory, and yet—and yet, keep the proud, sensitive Mexican people from resenting our border and Wall Street conspiracies, resisting our invasions and attacking our troops.

THAT'S a bit of the practical job the revolutionary government of Mexico has on its hands. That's what it doesn't do well, and can't; not yet. And that's a just reason, as I have said, for the impatience of all men with it. But there's one more reason to consider.

With each one of these practical problems goes also a theoretical problem. With the problem of getting a currency, goes the problem of getting a money that is not, like ours, a bank privilege. With the problem of reopening the banks, presses the problem of opening banks that have no government privilege and no monopoly of credit. With the problem of restarting transportation runs the problem of making the railroads carry, not exploit, their traffic, and of keeping the railroad men running the trains and not the state. And so, while they want to reopen the mines and keep the oil-wells flowing and revive agriculture and industry, they want more of that wealth to stay in Mexico and to go, as much as possible, to the people, Mexican and others, who do the actual work. In a word, they want to accomplish the purposes of the revolution; to knock out "the" system, and develop, not a rich, cultured, leisure class, but a well-to-do, educated people with very general opportunities for some work and a good deal of play; and no fear and no superstition.

And this, this is the chief reason for the opposition, both in Mexico and in the United States and in England, Spain, France, Germany, and Rome; this is the real reason why there are persons all along our border and elsewhere praying and plotting and lying and paying for intervention and war; this—and the failure of those persons to understand and to believe that Carranza and his inner circle of revolutionists are really at work on the foundations of "the" social problem with a chance—one chance in a hundred—of solving a good part of it for the people he is pledged solemnly to serve and—all other peoples.

For, of course, if Mexico solves it, it will be solved.

President Wilson has got us into Mexico a second time. He got us out the first time. He may get us out the second time. The third time may be—unlucky.

He has shown by his whole Mexican policy that he has understood what they were struggling for down there and he has trusted us, the people, to understand why he has stood against intervention and its consequences.

Could he trust us to understand why he did not make war if our troops, sent there again and again to pursue bandits financed in the United States, should be attacked by the "ignorant Mexicans" who might—misunderstand our philanthropy?

There is a great hope and a great danger in Mexico.



"SINISTER  
AND UN-  
SCRUPU-  
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BRING ON  
WAR."

INTO MEXICO  
AND—OUT!







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